



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

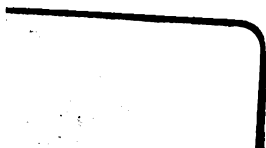




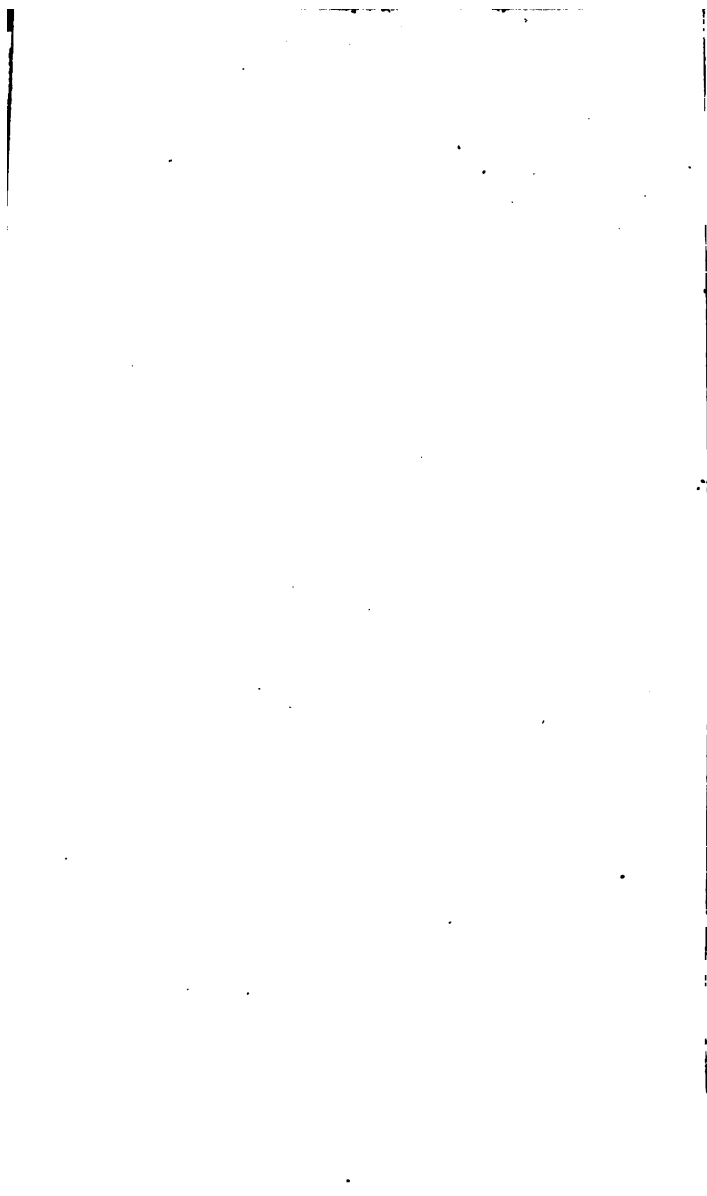
008454R

42.

184.







A STRICTER ADHERENCE TO

The Rubric,

IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH:

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY, NOTTINGHAM,

ON THE EVENING OF NOV. 13, 1842.

BY

ARCHDEACON WILKINSON,

THE VICAR.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. F. & J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL:

B. S. OLIVER, NOTTINGHAM.

1842.

184

A

S E R M O N,

&c.

1 COR. xiv. 40.

“ Let all things be done decently and in order.”

IN matters of domestic or of civil life, confusion and embarrassment necessarily ensue, where no regard is paid to this valuable admonition of maintaining decency and order. And if such be requisite for the conduct and comfort of life, in all concerns of a temporary kind, how much more necessary and essential are they to matters of a higher and more momentous nature? When decency and order are not observed in every part of the worship of God, no spiritual benefit can be derived from it, for such cannot be acceptable to that great Being to whom it is offered. It is a wise precaution, that in seeking the best method in which a paramount duty is to be performed, especial care be taken that the duty itself be not impaired or weakened by over-attention to form,—that the shadow be not too strong for the relief of the substance; yet is it of consequence that the one should be so blended into the other as to pro-

duce perfect harmony in the whole: but in reference to the soul-important service to be rendered to Almighty God, it is impossible that too much pains can be devoted even to the slightest particular connected with it. In the tabernacle in the wilderness, as well as in the temple of God at Jerusalem, "the snuffers were of pure gold¹."

When the pious Reformers of our branch of the Catholic Church purified our religion from the dross and impurities of popish superstition and error, they prescribed a due method and order of public worship to be observed in the congregations of the people. For it is the privilege and prerogative of every Christian nation to prescribe such forms, rites, and ceremonies for its public worship as may be deemed, by the government of that nation, best suited to the genius and character of the people, provided, that nothing be decreed contrary to the written word of God.

For the preservation of this decency and order in the service of Almighty God, and with an especial view to uniformity in the mode, manner, and substance of that service, the Reformers compiled a Form of Common Prayer, which being afterwards approved of by the Convocation, and sanctioned by the three Estates of the Realm, became the prescribed and established worship of the land. To this

¹ Ex. xxxvii. 23 ; 1 Kings vii. 50 ; 2 Chron. iv. 22.

Form are annexed directions how, when, and in what manner the prayers are to be offered up in every episcopally consecrated Church in the Empire. These directions are called "Rubrics," from the circumstance of their being originally printed in red ink, in contradistinction to the prayers, which were printed in a different colour and character.

As the teaching of our blessed Lord and His Apostles enjoined unity of spirit in the bond of peace; and as in the Gospel dispensation there is "one body, and one spirit, and we are all called in one hope of our calling;—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all²;" so, to our wise Reformers it seemed good for the preservation of that unity, that the people in this Christian land, and in its Christian dependencies, should worship God, as it were, with one mouth and one voice, through the medium of one Common Form of Prayer. And that the danger of using rash, improper, or unsuitable language, when addressing the Almighty in prayer, might not be incurred, every prescribed prayer was composed in strict unison with the spirit and meaning of Holy Scripture, and every word, phrase, and sentence, was employed such as was most becoming in man to offer, and best adapted, as far as human means could be used, to the Majesty of the Most High to accept.

² Eph. iv. 4.

For, as if to guard against all public extemporaneous effusions, Solomon had directed, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few³;" and it will be found, upon examination, that the words of the framers of our Liturgy are few indeed, only sufficient to connect the sentiments and spirit of the Holy Scriptures in the adaptation of them to a precatory form. The Books of Moses present us with many prescribed forms of prayer; we there read the blessing of the Jewish priests,—the blessing at the removal or resting of the Ark,—the hymn which the children of Israel sang *together* unto the Lord; which they could not have thus done had not the hymn been already known. In the expiation of a certain murder, the elders of the city which were next to the slain were expressly commanded to say a *form* of prayer precomposed by God Himself. Again we read the form of confession and prayer of the person offering the first fruits, or the giver of yearly tithes; these were all prescribed and appointed for general use amongst the Jews. Look at the Psalms of David, a book purposely composed for the service of the temple.—Does it not abound in forms of prayers, or of thanksgiving, or of penitential confession?

³ Eccl. v. 2.

But the Sectarists who indulge in what they call the liberty of a self-prompted worship, unrestrained and unfettered by preconcerted forms, (a practice adapted to persons accustomed to *feel* rather than to *think*,) conceive all this to have been allowed to the Jews in condescension to their weakness, and suited to their peculiar system, and that now, in these days, it would savour of their "beggary elements" to place restraint upon the outpourings of the spirit of Christians⁴. But, let us ask, how came it to pass, when Christianity was introduced to supersede the ceremonial, but not the moral law of the Jews, that John the Baptist gave a form of prayer to his disciples, as the Jewish doctors and teachers before him had given to theirs? And why was it, that our Saviour, so far from censuring his example, followed it, and also gave His followers a form to help their devotions? Would He have repeated and recom-

⁴ It is said, "that prescribed forms of prayer are a stinting of the Spirit, by people whose heads have been filled with harangues and discourses concerning the gift and spirit of prayer, which they have been told consists not only in pious and holy affections, but also in a variety and volubility of words and expressions; and consequently, a set form of prayer and the spirit of prayer are inconsistent; which is in effect to say, that a man cannot make use of any of the penitential psalms, nor any other form of prayer and praise in the divine Book of Psalms; no, nor rehearse even the Lord's prayer itself, with the spirit of prayer; which, to affirm, is the height of madness."—Bp. Bull on the Common Prayer.

mended that form *twice*,—at different times and upon different occasions—had He not desired to have established beyond all doubt and contradiction the utility and expediency of such a mode?

The Christian Church adopted this practice from the earliest times, and has preserved it to the present day, opposed by none in this country but by Sectarians, who, in their use of unpremeditated prayer (as far as it is unpremeditated), degenerate into rhapsodies of absurdity and enthusiasm in their extemporaneous effusions. Independent of the consideration how rarely it happens that, with an uncommon and powerful readiness of thought and expression, any one is able to make an unpremeditated address to an earthly sovereign in a manner suitable to a subject to deliver, and a monarch to receive; how is it possible that all the people in the congregation assembled, high and low, instructed or ignorant, should be able to join, or concur, or assent to the petition of the prayer offered, before they know what it is that is to be asked? for if they have to consider the necessity and propriety of it, before they can acquiesce or give their consent to the object of supplication,—and if this is to be done as each sentence or sentiment is delivered,—this very process of consideration, of reflection and assent, while it keeps the mind and judgment perpetually on the stretch, and carries it away, perchance, by the mere force of human eloquence,

destroys at once all possibility of devotion. But our well-understood and justly-appreciated form of prayer is in every part of it suited to the understanding of *all* the people ; they have long ago admitted the necessity of it to meet their several wants and desires ; they are not only perfectly familiar with it, but they have heard and know of no better nor more suitable language to express their sentiments and feelings ; they entertain a love for it ; they admire its copiousness and its conciseness, its beauty and comfort ; and in the use of what all approve, they see that the minister, in adhering to it, is deprived of all vain ostentation in the display of his talents ; for in addressing God, the minister is bound to use the highest, the most sublime, and the most beautiful simplicity of language ; while, in addressing men, the minister is at liberty to use such language as, being decent and orderly, he may solemnly address to those of like passions with himself. Prescribed Form of Prayer alone accomplishes these purposes, while it secures a still higher advantage, — that of preserving unity of faith in worship. It also hinders the foisting of false doctrine and heresy into the worship of God,—the natural tendency to wander in prayer,—the chance of omitting some important petition,—ambiguous expressions, and improper or misapplied language, prompted by the impulse of the moment ; beyond all this, it reduces all Churches to

uniformity, preventing disagreement and contradiction, while at the same time it elevates and instructs the mind ; and thus it is, that all who live in communion and fellowship with the Church “pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also⁵.”

Now, as it is not only necessary that you should understand and be conversant with the doctrines of the Gospel, and be familiar with that sense of them which the Church has put upon them, that so you may “be always ready to give an account to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you⁶ ;” so it is essential that you should also understand the nature of the Church through which these doctrines are delivered to you ; for, through the channel of the Church, God has ever been pleased to dispense his blessings to the nations and people calling upon His Name. On this account it is that I am anxious to address you on the due performance of divine worship, as it is directed by our Church ; for you cannot be ignorant that, although no people whatever may alter, abridge, or adulterate one iota of Christian doctrine, as expressed in Holy Writ, without incurring God’s fearful indignation, yet, as I have already said, that it is left for every nation to prescribe for itself rites and ceremonies of worship, provided they do not decree any thing contrary to

⁵ 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

⁶ 1 Pet. iii. 15.

God's written word. In conformity, then, with this right of the Church, an Act of Parliament was passed in the first year of Queen Elizabeth, called "the Act of Uniformity," by which the services, as conducted in our National Church, were directed to be performed in one general and uniform manner: but in after times, when the puritanical power of the enemies of Charles the First unhappily prevailed over the nation—when rebellion in all its hideous forms usurped the lawful and constitutional authority of the land, this uniformity was not only interrupted, but swept aside; and the Prayer Book itself, that compendium of piety, was condemned and treated as if it had been a work of profanation and iniquity. In those times of anarchy, confusion, and trouble, a moral and religious darkness covered the whole land,—the lamp of the Lord was extinguished in our Churches,—a dull, false, and glimmering light was substituted for it, and true piety and spiritual worship were no more! But upon the return of Charles the Second, the restoration of Monarchy brought with it the restoration of God's public worship; the Prayer Book was brought forth from its obscurity, and another Act of Uniformity passed, which not only provided for the full restitution of the discarded Liturgy, but, in some essential points, also provided for a still more strict adherence to the directions formerly given for its use; and the

same wise and judicious act remains in full force to the present day.

Time, however, has impaired and innovated upon this uniformity of performing divine worship, and in many respects the Rubrics, originally framed in wisdom, and with the utmost regard for decency and order, have either been overlooked or neglected. A spirit of forgetfulness, I had almost said, of indifference, to matters of this kind, has for some time past prevailed; and now, alas! in these liberalizing days, there are those who would regard these rubrical directions either as obsolete, or as "the weak and beggarly elements" of a by-gone superstition! I fear, also, that the spirit of sectarianism has prevailed unchecked even among some portion of ourselves, by which the jarring opinions and private judgments of self-opinionated men have been suffered to predominate over the sound and sincere discrimination of our forefathers in matters of worship, and that there has, consequently, been a gradual leaning to a dissenting polity.

The extravagant conduct of the Sectarists, and the overbearing pride of Romanism, have, however, called us to deeper reflection; and we find, as it has been discovered again and again before, that our wisdom and strength lie in following in the old paths, and quitting those newer ones trodden down by the feet of the wanderers from the fold of the Christian Church.

A very few years since the love of novelty prevailed to such an extent, that nothing was thought of but making alterations in our Liturgy, by which it might, as was affirmed, be both abbreviated and improved. These abbreviations were suggested by the supine and lukewarm, the improvements by the indolent or designing: and now, in full view of all the evil that must have arisen had clamour and irreverence prevailed, it is found that our security and comfort lie in preserving, in all its integrity, this Palladium of Devotion, and of requiring obedience to its directions, and a more exact compliance with its rules and regulations.

Hence it is, that we are now called upon to pay stricter attention to her directions, in order that the Church may have scope and power to work out her own requirements, and that nothing may interfere to clog the freedom of her proper course to effect that good, which if left in her integrity, and the full and original freedom and vigour of her Ritual, she is so admirably calculated and enabled to produce.

She prescribes that her services shall, on every occasion, commence by the Minister reading some passages selected from holy writ, which may seize upon the minds of the people and dispose them to pious meditation; and, therefore, with such an object in view, to begin the service of the sanctuary by singing praise to God, before the congregation are in

a fit state to do so, is improper and objectionable. This is so true and so reasonable, that in the restitution of due decency and order, the practice will *here* be discontinued. Having thus brought the congregation to due reflection, the Minister proceeds to the Exhortation, earnestly and affectionately exciting them to consider the holy purpose for which they are assembled, namely, for confessing their sins,—for rendering thanks to God,—for setting forth his most worthy praise,—hearing his most holy word, and asking for “those things that are necessary, as well for the body as the soul:” and all this in a manner the best adapted “to instruct the ignorant, to admonish the negligent, to support the fearful, and to check the presumptuous, seeing that all these tempers are found in every mixed congregation, which ought to be brought into a state of preparation for this holy work’.”

After the Exhortation, the people are invited to make a general Confession of their sins, and that, in a form the most solemn and comprehensive:—and as all have sinned and grievously sinned, and all do sin continually, it is most essential that such general confession should be made unto salvation by all; and while engaged in this important duty in making this acknowledgment with your lips, each one of you

’ See Bisse on the Beauty of Holiness.

ought, at the same time, to make a particular confession in your hearts, of the personal sins which you have committed, known only to God and yourselves—for both may be done together, whether they be sins of omission or commission, public or private,—all those evil devices and desires of your hearts, which spring from the original corruption and unworthiness of your nature;—all these, if thus confessed, and sincerely repented of, will, for the sake of Christ, be assuredly forgiven.

It would be almost needless for me to say (did not the want of attention to it make it necessary to observe) that you are distinctly to understand, that the performance of divine service does not devolve upon the Minister *alone*, but that it is designed that you should consider it as your bounden duty, to perform your portion of it also, by repeating loudly and distinctly all those parts which the congregation themselves are directed to discharge. The joining in this confession of sins is as much required of every individual amongst you, as of the Minister—in this he confesses for himself only, he cannot possibly confess for others; you defeat, therefore, the object of the framers of our admirable Liturgy when you refuse or neglect to perform those portions of the service which are assigned to you.

Must it not then be apparent to you all, that they who fail to be present in the public worship when

this confession is required to be made, act injuriously to their own souls, and interrupt the devotion of others? If you are punctual, as to time, in your worldly engagements, be doubly cautious that you keep, with still greater punctuality, such as have reference to your spiritual good.

Having made Confession of your sins by your lips and in your hearts, in all sincerity and truth, you are now prepared—you are now qualified—you are only now ready to hear and to receive the Absolution, which the Priest alone, as the minister of God, is empowered in *His Name*, and in His Name only, to pronounce. “The benefit of this Absolution is great, because it sanctifies your persons, which sanctifies all your offerings. Every person when he stands before God is to be looked upon like Joshua, the high priest, as standing before the angel of the Lord, ‘clothed in filthy garments;’ but after he has confessed and repented of his sins, then the Lord says to the priest appointed to pronounce the Absolution, as He did to those that stood by Joshua, ‘Take away the filthy garments from him^s.’ And to the person himself thus absolved He says, as He did to Joshua, ‘Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ They, therefore, who come to pray after the Absolution is

^s Zech. iii. 3.

pronounced, however they may come prepared and arrayed in their own righteousness, must look upon themselves as still 'clothed in filthy garments'¹."

Consider then the propriety of these necessary and gradual steps, in the performance of your devotions, when joining in public prayer.

Thus far you have been engaged in preparation, in making yourselves fit, to pray unto God; for, before you were excited to a pious frame of mind—before you confessed your sins—before you received God's promise of pardon and forgiveness upon due repentance,—you were not in a fit state, condition, or frame of mind, to offer unto Him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; and, without preparation, what, alas, would your approach to the throne of grace be, but a temptation? For it is a general rule for the temple as well as the closet, "before thou prayest, prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord²."

On this account it is, that the impropriety of singing to the praise and glory of God on your *immediate* entrance into the Church becomes the more apparent.

The service of prayer, therefore, now commences, and is introduced by the whole united assembly of worshippers repeating, in one voice, that form of

¹ Bisse on the Beauty of Holiness.

² Eccclus. xviii. 23.

prayer which Christ has graciously left to his Church ; and here, again, I press upon you the necessity of your uttering the several sentences of it audibly in conjunction with the Minister, and with all that fervour and piety which service to the Most High God demands ; that by so doing, you may show yourselves the disciples of Jesus Christ, while at the same time you conform to the invariable practice of the early Christians, when the whole congregation pronounced it aloud together.

You will observe also, that when making your confession of sins, and receiving the promise of the absolution and forgiveness of them, and when offering up this prayer, your posture, if you reverently do all things “decently and in order,” will be that of *kneeling*—a posture in best accordance with that spirit of humility and devotion, which becomes all those who worship God in earnestness and truth.

The Church next directs that a portion of the inspired Book of Psalms should be read or sung in alternate verses by the Priest and by the people, or by both, and sometimes by them all together, as best calculated to excite in the minds of the congregation pious and devotional sentiments and feelings.

These Psalms form an epitome of the Bible, treating upon almost every divine subject. They are adorned with the figures, and are set off with all the graces, of poetry—a poetry, too, recommended by

the charms of a musical adaptation, and full of instruction and comfort. These Psalms have been likened to the garden of Paradise, affording to us, in miniature, every thing that groweth elsewhere, "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food,"—and above all, what was there lost, is here restored—the tree of life in the midst of the garden¹. "What is there necessary," says Hooker, "which the Psalms are not able to teach?"

They, therefore, justly form the principal part of the *joint* praises which we offer unto God;—I say, *joint* praises, for as they were sung in alternate verses by the Priests, and by the people of the Jews, and were composed with that intention, and were so used by our Lord Himself and His disciples in the Temple and synagogues of Jerusalem, so are they to be performed, whether read or sung, by the Priest and the people in this part of our temple-worship².

In the performance of this part of the service the congregation are directed to *stand*, for it was the practice of the early Christian Church to perform all parts of Public Worship which were not celebrated

¹ See Bp. Horne on the Psalms.

² Pliny, describing the customs of the first Christians to the Emperor Trajan, observes that they were accustomed to *chant in alternate strains* among themselves, a psalm to Christ as their God. "*Carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem.*" Ep. l. 10.

kneeling, in the posture of standing. This was the next most reverent manner of worship used in the Jewish Church, and thence introduced and adopted into our own. Indeed, the Church acknowledges no other posture for the worshippers than these two, of kneeling and standing; nowhere do its directions so much as allude to sitting at all: let it then appear from your practice and demeanour that you never sit in a Church but *to hear*, and that in the offering up of prayer and praise you either kneel or stand; indeed, it is the certain proof of indifference, or negligence, or thoughtlessness, whenever you perceive a person in a sitting posture during the time of prayer, unless in cases of age and infirmity, or actually for want of sufficient room.

After the alternate reading of the Psalms, be seated; and then attentively listen to the Word of God as it is read from the Book of Life; and here let me again and again exhort you to provide, each one of you, with a Bible, and from it follow the Minister, word by word, as he reads. You will find this most edifying; for the subject matter will take a stronger hold upon your minds, and in moments of retirement, they will often and often recur to what has thus so forcibly awakened their attention.

At the conclusion of the Lessons, join the Minister in repeating *aloud* every clause of the Creed, and with every clause consider what it is that really and

truly constitutes your faith. I say, repeat each clause yourselves aloud, for the Minister while he declares his own belief, cannot declare yours;—this you must each of you do for yourselves.

And here you must be reminded, that the Church directs you, by its Canons or Laws, that you should reverently bow whenever mention is made of the Lord Jesus; not merely when that sacred name occurs in the Creed, but that at all other times due and lowly reverence be made, in compliance with the injunction of the Apostle, that “at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ* is *Lord*, to the glory of God the Father¹.” Fear not, therefore, either to be called or reckoned a Papist, by not only complying with this injunction of the Apostle and law of your Church, but by testifying, by these outward ceremonies and gestures, the inward humility of your souls. I should add, that the turning to the East when repeating your Creed is a very ancient and very significant custom; the true Christian turns his eye with peculiar interest to the East, whence “the day-spring from on high has visited him²”; he fixes his gaze upon the “morning-star” of his hope, whence “the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing on his wings,” and with all his heavenly influences³.

¹ Phil. ii. 10.

² Luke i. 78.

³ Mal. iv. 2.

Throughout the Litany continue on your knees. Make all the responses in that beautiful service, and follow with your eye each word as it is read, and with your heart and understanding every sentiment that it breathes ; for as the Minister is appointed the intercessor of prayer for the congregation, you are to be silent when it his office to offer up supplications and praises in your behalf, but at the close of each utter aloud your assent by an "Amen." And when you are afterwards engaged in the act of offering up those thanksgivings with which this portion of the service terminates, call to mind this reflection:— that "a devout man brings to Church the recollection of special and particular mercies, particular bounties, particular providences, particular deliverances, particular relief, recently experienced, specially and critically granted in the moment of want or danger, or eminently and supereminently vouchsafed to us individually. These he bears in his thoughts, he applies as he proceeds ; that which was general he makes close and circumstantial ; his heart rises towards God, by a sense of mercies vouchsafed to himself¹." Having performed this duty, you will rise from the posture of humiliation refreshed, renovated, and edified, and ready to vent your happier feelings by again joining with the congregation in a general song of praise.

¹ Paley on Devotion.

Again, on your knees, hear God's commandments proclaimed, and with each offer aloud the prayer that his Holy Spirit may incline your hearts to keep them, and in earnestness of devotion guard your minds from wandering. After the prayer (the Collect of the day), arise and listen to the Scripture which composes the Epistle, and then stand to hear the Gospel, and having heard it, declare your belief in that and in every other part of it, by repeating the more comprehensive Creed next appointed. At this period of the service, if any notices are to be given, these, of what nature soever they are¹, must be given by the Minister; and at such times as the Exhortation to come unto the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is read² (that is, upon the Sunday before its

¹ The Parish Clerk, being simply an individual of the congregation, has no authority to call upon them "to sing to the praise and glory of God," or to say, "Let us sing," any more than to say, "Let us pray," but the Minister only.

² Between the Rubric requiring notice to be given of the Communion immediately *after the Nicene Creed*, and that which directs the same notice to be given in the Exhortation after the prayer for "the Church Militant," there is a discrepancy, which Shepherd, in his work on the "Common Prayer," states to be an oversight. A high authority of the present day advises the notice to be given *immediately after the Nicene Creed*, when all the congregation are standing, and most of them facing the altar, in preference to causing them to rise from the posture of kneeling, in which attitude they are, in the latter case, engaged in prayer unto the close of the service.

administration), hear it in a standing posture, and give heed and diligence to the same. Continue, also, standing while engaged in singing another Psalm of praise. And here I must observe, that as the Psalms are songs of divine inspiration, such only will *here* be sung in future; for beautiful, and elegant, and expressive, as many of the hymns are, most of them are but human compositions, and some of them, from not being in full or clear accordance with the doctrines of Christianity, as the Church receives them, must be considered as very imperfect channels through which, with the voice of melody, we can render fit and becoming glory and praise to God.

After the singing, listen attentively to the sermon, and bear in mind that he who delivers it is only a frail and erring mortal like yourselves; but as he "preaches not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord¹," and stands as a Minister of God charged with a message to deliver unto you, he is entitled to your attention; and it becomes you to listen to his exhortations, and receive his advice as an ambassador of God. Reflecting thus, you must perceive that his discourse is no fit subject of criticism or of cavilling, but to be received with all possible allowance for the infirmity and weakness of himself, but with respect and rever-

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 5.

ence for the sake of that Lord and Master, whose servant he is, standing before you in His stead.

I should here remark that the Prayer Book has provided no prayer to be used by the preacher, nor left him any discretion to supply one himself, before the delivery of his sermon, or the reading of the Homily; but as it is an invariable rule of the Church that no Minister shall offer up any prayer for the congregation but such as the Church has prescribed, it is clear that, in strict propriety, none should be offered in the pulpit. The canon law, however, seems to supply the want or deficiency by prescribing a form in which the preacher may desire the prayers of the congregation for certain persons and blessings, all and every petition of which is to be summed up and comprehended in the Lord's Prayer; yet as such a form, though used in Cathedrals and in Churches upon particular occasions, is not generally adopted, and was evidently prescribed the more effectually to guard against all extemporaneous effusions; and as the disuse of it has been sanctioned by long established custom, its disuse may reasonably continue so long as the episcopal practice prevails, of uniformly substituting some prayer or collect from the Liturgy to be used in its stead¹.

¹ The frequent repetition of the Lord's prayer is too commonly objected against by those who have not duly considered

In the morning of each Sabbath, remember that divine worship does not end with the Sermon, but that it is only an intervening portion of it, so that when there is no Sacrament to be administered, the service is to be carried on by reading a sentence or

the propriety of its intentional recurrence. "The spirit of devotion," says Paley, "reconciles us to *repetitions*. In other subjects repetition soon becomes tiresome and offensive. In devotion it is different. Deep, earnest, heart-felt devotion, naturally vents itself in repetition. Observe a person racked by excruciating bodily pain ; or a person suddenly struck with the news of some dreadful calamity ; or a person labouring under some aching anguish of soul, and you will always find him breaking out into ejaculations, imploring from God support, mercy, and relief, over and over again uttering the same prayer in the same words. Nothing, he finds, suits so well the extremity of his sufferings, the urgency of his wants, as a continual recurrence to the same cries, and the same call for Divine aid. Our Lord himself, in his last agony, affords a high example of what we are saying: thrice he besought his heavenly Father ; and thrice he used the same words. Repetition, therefore, is not only tolerable in devotion, but it is natural : it is even dictated by a sense of suffering, and an acuteness of feeling. It is coldness of affection, which requires to be enticed and gratified by continual novelty of idea, or expression, or action. The repetitions and prolixity of pharisaical prayers, which our Lord censures, are to be understood of those prayers which run out into mere formality and into great length, no sentiment or affection of the heart accompanying them ; but uttered as a task, from an opinion (of which our Lord justly notices the absurdity) that they should really be heard for their much speaking. Actuated by the spirit of devotion, we can never offend in this way, we can never be the object of this censure."

two of the Offertory preparatory to the introduction of that most beautiful and comprehensive prayer, for the Church militant ; and then follows the Collect, after which the congregation are to be dismissed with the blessing of God's Minister. But when the Sacrament is to be administered, while the alms are collecting during the time of reading the Offertory, children, and such as are unable to communicate, may then depart, but the service only ends when the Sacrament is concluded¹.

¹ The Rubrics for the direction of the Communion, and the administration of the Eucharist, are printed at the *conclusion* as well as at the *beginning* of the service ; to both of which attention is to be given. The Vicar or Curates wear, during the entire morning service, the surplice, and consequently are enabled to be present in the Church during the whole of it. In compliance with the requirement of the Rubric, the elements are placed upon the table by the priest while the Offertory is read, and are only covered with the napkin after the communicants have all partaken of them, such being required only after their consecration.—“In compliance with primitive practice, the bread and wine is ordered by the Rubric to be set *solemnly* upon the table by the priest. From whence it appears, that the placing the elements upon the Lord's table before the beginning of the morning prayer, by the hands of a clerk or sexton (as is now the general practice) is a profane and shameful breach of the aforesaid Rubric; and consequently, that it is the duty of every minister to prevent it for the future, and *reverently* to place the bread and wine himself upon the table, immediately after he has placed on the alms.”—Wheatley. In the *Evening Service* the first

And here I must be allowed publicly to express my thanks to God that so many more of you, than formerly, have at length arrived at the conviction that you are not at liberty to refuse compliance with the earnest injunction of your Saviour, that you should thus commemorate the act of His dying for your salvation; and that, awakened to a full sense of duty, you at length are compelled to acknowledge that He has imperatively commanded you, one and all, to do so, continually, in remembrance of Him until His coming again. Be well assured that the great test of your being really Christians, and not so in name only, is exhibited and proved by an habitual devout participation of that Sacrament! Be assured that it is as binding upon each one of you to obey this, as to keep any other of God's commandments! Be assured that you can evince no love of Christ, no regard for all that He has done and suffered for you, no grateful or elevated sense of the great and glorious atonement which He has made for your sins, if you do not perform this duty regularly—often and often,

psalm sung by the congregation is introduced, as directed, after the third Collect. And the preacher, if he has not been officiating in that service, ascends the pulpit in his gown.

It is to be observed, that in all Cathedrals and collegiate Churches or Chapels, the clerical members of those corporate bodies discharge the duty of every part of divine service, whether of prayer or preaching, in the surplice.

in remembrance of Him! Be assured that in this Sacrament, if faithfully received by you, the grace and favour of God are more abundantly poured upon you; that if truly and faithfully received by you, all your repented sins are forgiven as often as you partake of it! Be assured that your souls are then fed and nourished with heavenly and spiritual food, that you are then mystically incorporated with Christ, "one with Christ and Christ with you!" Be assured that if you neglect, or scorn it, or are indifferent to it, hesitating whether you shall obey His invitation or not, that God's fearful indignation and wrath are hanging over you, for thus "doing despite to the Spirit of grace," and for "counting the blood of the covenant wherewith you are sanctified as an indifferent matter, a thing of nought, an unholy thing¹."

Come, therefore, come to the holy table; think of what God has promised, and what Christ has done for you. Come and receive greater and greater accessions of grace; come to this fountain and source of spiritual health, and be healed and made whole of whatever disease you have. Receive here remission of your sins, heavenly nutriment for the soul, and all such other gifts as may not only keep you from the defilements of the flesh, the pollutions of the world,

¹ Heb. x. 29.

and the snares of the tempter, but which will assuredly cleanse and purify your hearts, and make them temples for the habitation of the Holy Spirit, and so prepare you for those heavenly abodes where the holy and spiritual worship which you have begun here, in the Church militant, will be renewed, and invigorated, and carried on in the Church triumphant in heaven.

In short, do all things relating to the all-important work of Christ's religion "decently and in order;" let everything in His House of Prayer "be done unto edifying;" the duty will then not only become easy, but pleasant and delightful to you, so that, experiencing the comfort, the composure, the solace, and the happiness of it, you will exclaim with the pious Psalmist: "Lord, I love the habitation of Thy House, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth." I am always glad when the Sabbath bells invite me to go "up to the House of the Lord;" so great is my delight, so refined, so exquisite is the pleasure of it to my soul, that I reckon "one day in Thy courts better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the House of my God than dwell in the tents of ungodliness. O how amiable are Thy tabernacles, Lord God of hosts! my soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God . . . Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow

a nest where she may lay her young ; even thy altars,
 O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are
 they that dwell in Thy House, they will always be
 praising thee : blessed is the man that putteth his
 trust in Thee ¹ !”

¹ Ps. lxxxiv.

THE END.

